NPS Form 10-900

OMB Control No. 1024-0018
expiration date 03/31/2022

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form.* If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse
Other names/site number: C. Clifton Young Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse
Name of related multiple property listing:
N/A
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing

2. Location

Street & number: 300 Booth Street
City or town: Reno State: Nevada County: Washoe
Not For Publication: ☐ Vicinity: ☐

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___**national** ___**statewide** X **local**

Applicable National Register Criteria:

___**A** ___**B** X **C** ___**D**

1/29/2021

Signature of certifying official/Title: **Date**

Federal Preservation Officer, U.S. General Services Administration

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property X meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

9/16/2020

Signature of commenting official: **Date**

State Historic Preservation Officer, Nevada State Historic Preservation Office

Title : **State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government**

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

_X_ entered in the National Register

___ determined eligible for the National Register

___ determined not eligible for the National Register

___ removed from the National Register

___ other (explain:) _____

Barbara Wyatt 3-22-21

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private:	☐
Public – Local	☐
Public – State	☐
Public – Federal	X

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

Building(s)	X
District	☐
Site	☐
Structure	☐
Object	☐

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1		Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use
Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)
GOVERNMENT; government offices

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)
GOVERNMENT; government offices

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)
MODERN MOVEMENT: International Style and New Formalism

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)
Principal exterior materials of the property: STONE: Granite, Marble; BRICK; METAL: Anodized Aluminum; CERAMIC TILE; TERRA COTTA; and GLASS

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with **a summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse is a five-story federal building located at 300 Booth Street in Reno, Nevada. The building is an example of Mid-Century Modern architecture reflecting the International Style with some New Formalist elements, expressed in a 116,997-square-foot volume. Facing west onto Booth Street, it was commissioned by the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) to provide new courtroom space and consolidate dozens of federal bureaus and agencies that were previously spread out across the city. The Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse was designed by one of Reno's best-known architectural firms, Lockard, Casazza & Parsons and Associates, and features an interior mural by renowned Nevada artist Richard Guy Walton. Adhering to the principles of Mid-Century Modern architecture, which represents a collection of styles and approaches, the building has a geometric rectangular main volume sheltering a portico with columnar supports; side volumes in a modified trapezoidal shape with slightly curving east and west walls; a flat roof with overhanging coffered soffits; granite, marble, glazed brick and brick cladding; bands of aluminum windows separated by blue porcelain enamel spandrels; and decorative multi-colored metal and porcelain enamel grille work

at the primary façade. The geometric massing, horizontal window bands, sculptural configuration, and flat roofs of the building reflect the influence of the International Style, while its projecting roof overhangs, prominent columnar supports, symmetry, use of decorative grilles and panels, and abstractly traditional materials and ornamentation reveal a secondary New Formalist influence. The majority of the building's exterior design elements remain in their original condition, and the most visible public interior spaces (the first floor main lobby and fifth floor courtroom lobby) retain most of their original finishes and features, including Walton's "Life Before the Pioneer Era" mural. The building retains historical and architectural integrity and continues to convey its historic character and significance.

Narrative Description

Site

The Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse is located at 300 Booth Street in Reno's Old Southwest neighborhood, located southwest of downtown and below (west of) the bluff atop which sits the Newland Heights residential area. It occupies a 4.24- acre parcel defined by Booth Street on the west, Keystone Avenue on the east, and parcel lines on the north and south. The building itself is in the northern part of the parcel and is shallowly set back from the sidewalk at Booth Street, separated from it by a row of concrete bollards and four semi-mature maple trees in low concrete planters. The area immediately fronting the building's main entry is hardscaped with concrete that sits flush with the adjacent sidewalk. This hardscaping is flanked by xeriscaping with semi-mature white birch trees at the northwest and southwest corners of the building. The northwest xeriscaped area contains a tall aluminum flagpole. The building is surrounded on its north, east, and south sides by an asphalt-paved parking lot for employees, encircled by non-original metal security fencing with rolling gates at the two driveways; the south driveway also has a non-original guard shack. In addition, the southern portion of the parcel provides unfenced parking for the public on an asphalt-paved lot with non-original freestanding metal shade structures topped by solar arrays. Chain link fencing demarcates the parcel boundaries to the east and south. None of the property's site features, landscaping, or associated structures contribute to the building's significance.

Exterior

The Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse is a five-story building constructed in a Modernist style combining elements of both the International Style and New Formalism. The steel-framed building sits on a concrete foundation and is clad in marble, granite, glazed brick, and brick. Its symmetrical massing reads as a solid rectangular volume oriented in the east-west direction, with projecting two-story extensions to the north and south; these extensions curve slightly at their west and east walls and create a modified trapezoidal shape. The front of the central volume projects over the main entry and is supported by eight slender, rectangular columns, adding a sense of weightlessness to the massive building. The building's simple geometric façades are clad in broad expanses of stone and brick punctuated by juxtaposed horizontal and vertical elements. Aluminum window bands alternate with porcelain enamel spandrels on the side and rear façades, with vertical glazed brick piers creating narrow bays. With the exception of the fixed glazing around the primary entry, the building's window openings contain operable sash:

aluminum casements over smaller aluminum hoppers. At the primary façade, geometric metal grilles and polychromatic porcelain enamel panels add exuberant detail, while the gently curving fronts of the trapezoidal side volumes lend a sense of theatricality. The building's flat roofs (on both the five-story and two-story volumes) feature plaster coffered overhanging eaves, and the roof of the central volume is topped by a mechanical penthouse enclosed with decorative terra cotta screens.

The primary (west) façade faces west onto Booth Street and contains the centered main entry at the first story level. As noted above, the upper three floors of the central volume overhang the lower two levels. The area set beneath this projecting upper façade is supported by eight columns creating a portico. The entrance portico is raised slightly above grade, accessed by a set of shallow granite steps extending across the entire front of the portico and bracketed by integral trapezoidal granite planters at the north and south ends. The support columns, clad in white marble and red granite, sit atop the raised portico floor, which is clad in pebbledash flooring. Plaster soffits with inset lighting cover the underside of the central volume's overhang at the portico. Concrete ramps at the planters' outer edges access the entry portico; the original ramps were widened in 2009, and decorative metal railings were replaced with the plain metal railings present today. The north and south ends of the entry portico steps once had matching decorative aluminum handrails; only the north example is extant.

The building's main entry features a double-height, aluminum-framed, fully glazed assembly comprising approximately a third of the primary façade's first level. The glazed assembly's top portion is fronted by an anodized aluminum decorative grille bearing complex geometric motifs rendered in polychromatic porcelain enamel panels of various sizes. Set within and projecting from the larger glazed entry assembly is a single-height, rectangular, aluminum and glass vestibule with four sets of fully glazed aluminum double doors. The terrazzo-floored vestibule leads to four sets of the same door type, set flush in the main façade. All of the doors are 2018 replacements, and the vestibule itself was rebuilt and enlarged with in-kind aluminum framing and new bulletproof glazing to project about six feet further west (approximately double its original projection) at that time.

Above the portico, the upper portion of the façade presents an overall appearance of an exuberantly colored checkerboard five rows high and nineteen wide, composed of alternating blue porcelain enamel panels and decorative aluminum grilles with polychromatic porcelain enamel geometric motifs. This brightly colored rectangular checkerboard is set within a narrow aluminum frame, which projects slightly from the white glazed brickwork of the remainder of the façade. Three bands of aluminum windows sit behind the polychromatic grilles, at the first, third, and fifth rows, and recede from view within the overall pattern.

The primary (west) façade of the building's flanking volumes at the north and south curve gently toward the west at either end to create a concave lower-story "base" for the building. They are clad in white marble masonry panels with red granite at the cornice line and have no fenestration. The north volume's façade bears pin-mounted aluminum lettering reading "C. CLIFTON YOUNG/[Great Seal of the United States]/FEDERAL BUILDING/UNITED STATES COURT

HOUSE/300 BOOTH STREET". The south volume's façade bears the same signage except its seal is the reverse side of the Great Seal of the United States, featuring the layered pyramid below the Eye of Providence. The north volume's façade also contains a cornerstone inscribed with "UNITED STATES OF AMERICA/LYNDON B JOHNSON/PRESIDENT/GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION/BERNARD L BOUTIN/ADMINISTRATOR/ 1964".

The building's side elevations (north and south façades) are almost identical. The two-story volumes are clad in white marble with red granite wrapping around the volumes at the cornice line. The side (north and south) façades of these lower volumes each have four window bays containing fixed aluminum windows separated vertically by red granite panels. At the east and west ends of the two-story volume are curved wing walls that project slightly, creating a bracketing effect.. At the five-story central volume, the lower portions of the north and south façades are clad in unglazed red brick and contain paired aluminum windows with shared brick sills. The upper portions of the north and south façades are clad in glazed white brick which forms vertical piers between vertical window strips composed of windows alternating with blue porcelain enamel panel spandrels.

The east (rear) façades of the building's two-story volumes are clad in white marble with red granite at the cornice line. As noted above, they project and slightly curve beyond the north and south façades to "bracket" them. Both rear façades contain single windows of the standard type (aluminum casement over hopper) at the second story; the north volume's façade has no other features, while the south volume's facade contains a loading dock with a roll-up metal door and a partially glazed metal door. An aluminum canopy shelters the dock and both entries, and a concrete ramp with plain metal handrails provides access from the parking lot. At the five-story central volume, the east façade is clad in unglazed red brick on the first two stories and glazed white brick at the top three. The first story contains two pairs of louvered metal doors flanking a large metal louvered vent centered in the façade. To the south is a concrete ramp with plain metal railings accessing a pair of partially glazed metal doors and a recessed entry containing a pair of fully glazed aluminum doors fronted by a concrete stoop.

The upper portion of the east façade contains a large, rectangular central bay, four stories in height. It is framed by a band of white brick, within which are twelve bays of alternating white brick piers and vertical window strips composed of windows alternating with blue enamel panel spandrels. This creates a pattern similar to that seen on the north and south façades, except here some of the windows are replaced with louvers and one of the vertical bays is a largely open emergency exit stair.

Interior

The Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse is almost 117,000 square feet in size, commissioned by the GSA to provide highly flexible office space for 31 federal departments and agencies employing 400-500 federal workers.[1] It continues its original function today, housing courtrooms, court-related offices, and federal agencies throughout its five stories, though it

[1] GSA, "GSA Common Services for Agencies in the Federal Building & U.S. Courthouse," 1964 (brochure for occupants); "Construction Moves Ahead," *Reno Gazette-Journal* 4/8/64.

currently has several vacant office spaces. The first floor contains the primary entry point, from the Booth Street entrance into the main lobby at the west side of the interior. From there, employees and visitors proceed north or south to secondary office and courtroom spaces, or east toward the elevator lobby to access upper floors (and beyond the elevator lobby, to additional private office and spaces for mechanical and storage functions at the first floor's east side).

The main lobby retains most of its original Tennessee gray marble wall finishes and light terrazzo flooring with curving baseboards which meet the bottom of the floor-to-ceiling marble. The lobby's east wall contains Richard Guy Walton's 1966 oil-painted mural "Life Before the Pioneer Era", set within the wall's marble finish, along with signage explaining the piece's meaning. The north and south walls bear wall-mounted aluminum and glass display cases and contain several metal doors and openings as detailed below. Recent alterations and additions include the addition of new acoustic ceiling tiles with recessed lighting, and enclosure of a central marble-clad security/check-in desk with aluminum-framed bulletproof glazing.

The main lobby leads to the open elevator lobby to the east, which largely retains the same original finishes of marble walls and terrazzo flooring. This lobby's layout was altered in 2015, when the formerly public area including the eastmost elevator and the area east of that were closed off with drywall partition walls and a set of metal double doors to create a new private corridor and elevator lobby. Behind the partition wall, this now-private area retains its original elevator lobby finishes, as well as an aluminum and glass mail chute and two aluminum mailboxes. An area in the marble wall that originally contained a roll-up door leading to a vending area and telephone booths has been infilled.

The main lobby also leads to a smaller, non-original lobby to the south, which in turn leads to a non-original first floor courtroom; the courtroom lobby has carpet flooring and acoustic ceilings, while the courtroom and judge's chambers beyond it have carpeted floors, wallpaper with wood wainscoting, and some original built-in furniture.[2] The other office and utility spaces on the first floor have had most of their original finishes replaced with modern materials. One restroom at the rear (east side) of the first floor retains its original finishes of pink, peach, and white ceramic tile floors and walls, with enameled steel stall partitions and original sink and toilet. It lies behind a locker room with carpet flooring and a shower retaining its original accordion-pleated sliding shower door.

The majority of the building's office space was and is in the upper floors, with the second through fourth floors designed to have similar layouts: large, open offices ring the perimeter, accessed by wide, double-loaded corridors in square configurations with restrooms, equipment rooms, and a few more office spaces at the center. This central service core also holds stairways and the building's three passenger elevator shafts. The large office spaces were designed to be flexible, and were later partitioned by various occupants as needed. The fourth floor reflected the same general layout seen on the second and third floors, but was designed to also house smaller

[2] Courtroom and judge's chambers information based on Carey &Co.'s 2016 DOE, 5; these spaces were not accessible at the time of the site visit on September 12, 2019.

offices, a snack bar, and additional small rooms related to the courtroom functions occupying the entire fifth floor.

The original office spaces on the second through fourth floors have been altered multiple times to accommodate needs of different tenants, and as a consequence have lost most of their original materials and details. Typical office finishes include gypsum board partitions, carpeting or bare concrete floors, and acoustic ceilings. Some perimeter offices retain their original wide, tiled window sills and porcelain drinking fountains. Corridor finishes have also been replaced over time, and now typically include replacement wood doors, vinyl or resilient rubber flooring, and acoustic ceilings; surviving original details include aluminum and glass mail chutes. Restroom finishes and fixtures have also been replaced, with the exception of the one restroom on the first floor noted above.

The fifth floor contains the building's other substantially intact public and semi-public spaces: the courtroom lobby and courtrooms themselves. The fifth floor elevator lobby, which leads directly into the open courtroom lobby at the south side of the floor, retains its original finishes of marble wainscot and framing around the elevator cabs. Its layout was altered in 2015, when the eastmost elevator and the area east of that were closed off with drywall partition walls (creating a chamfered corner) and a set of wood double doors to create a new private elevator area and entrance for judge use. The rest of the courtroom lobby retains its original marble wainscot, marble window sills, and terrazzo flooring, as well as original features including inset wall heater vents, a porcelain drinking fountain with marble surround, and a set of three recessed telephone booths with light timers (telephones no longer present).

The courtroom lobby's west wall contains entries to two identical courtrooms, accessed via double wood doors with small wire glass panels. Both courtrooms have tall ceilings with replacement acoustic tile. Their walls are finished with original floor-to-ceiling hardwood panels and areas of vertical wood slats fronting acoustic material, with marble paneling behind the judges' benches. The courtrooms retain their original built-in wood furniture, including benches and elevated stands. Beyond the courtrooms, judges' chambers retain their original hardwood paneled walls and built-in furniture.[3]

Alterations

The following chronology of building alterations was developed through comparison of field observations through September of 2019 with historic photographs, original and existing drawings, personal communication with building managers, and other sources (including newspaper articles and photos):[4]

[3] Judges' chambers information based on Carey &Co.'s 2016 DOE, 7; these spaces were not accessible at the time of the site visit on September 12, 2019.

[4] Lockard, Casazza & Parsons and Associates, Architects and Engineers, Court House and Federal Office Building, Architectural Drawings, 1962; Carey & Co., Inc. Architecture, "C. Clifton Young Federal Building and United States Courthouse, 300 Booth Street, Reno, Nevada: National Register Eligibility Determination" (prepared for the U.S. General Services Administration, May 2016); H+K Architects, Architectural Drawings, 2015 and 2016; URS Corporation, Architectural Drawings, 2009; visual observation and personal communication with GSA building

1988 "C. Clifton Young" aluminum lettering added over existing signage and seals at primary façade when Congress designated the name change. It is presumed that the non-original "300 Booth Street" lettering here was added at or around the same time.

2001 Addition of security features (concrete bollards and metal fencing).

2009 Multiple alterations as part of a building-wide accessibility and fire-life safety upgrade, including asbestos abatement, replacement of most interior doors, and replacement of most restroom finishes, partitions, and fixtures. The open office space off the south side of the first floor main lobby was converted to a courtroom fronted by its own small open lobby. The existing ramps flanking the steps at the building's primary façade were slightly reconfigured and widened at this time, and decorative aluminum railings were replaced with plain metal railings. The original handrail at the south end of the steps was removed; the one at the north end remains. The building was also re-roofed at this time, with built-up modified bitumen roofing material.

2015 Alterations to the elevator lobbies at the first and fifth floors. The formerly public lobby area to the east of the main first floor elevators was closed off to create a corridor; an area in the marble wall that originally contained a roll-up door leading to a vending area and telephone booths was infilled. One of the three elevators at the fifth floor was partitioned off to create a private elevator and new entrance for judge use.

2017 (Est.) Lawn at southwest and northwest corner of primary façade replaced with xeriscaping and trees. Solar panels added to parking lot.

2018 Primary entry altered as a security upgrade: the existing glass vestibule, which projected slightly from the rest of the façade, was rebuilt and enlarged with aluminum framing (in-kind material replacement) to expand out six feet (west). This accommodated slightly larger replacement aluminum doors and new bulletproof glazing. The security/check-in desk in the lobby was enclosed with bulletproof glass in aluminum framing.

Integrity

The Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse is an excellent example of early 1960s International Style architecture with New Formalist elements and retains a high level of integrity. The building retains its original location in southwest Reno, in an area which has seen redevelopment since 1965 as well as reconfiguration of Keystone Avenue nearby. However, the setting has

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manager Dean Mansfield during ARG site visit, September 12, 2019; email from GSA service call dispatcher Jo Smith, September 13, 2019.

substantially retained its original mixed-use nature, with properties including Reno High School and a strip mall remaining across Booth Street (both of which pre-date the Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse), and the bluff above the building remaining residential in nature. Although the building's site has been impacted by 2000s alterations, including the addition of security bollards and fencing, the original nature of the parcel's surface parking and minimal front landscaping remains readable. As a result, the building retains integrity of setting.

The building's design, materials, and workmanship are retained across the majority of the exterior; these include its massing, geometric and symmetrical facades; coffered roof overhangs; portico with columns, granite steps, and planters; granite, marble, glazed brick, and brick cladding; aluminum operable windows; porcelain enamel spandrels; aluminum grilles with multi-colored porcelain enamel panels; and glazed entry assembly. Expansion of the entry vestibule has altered the original nature of the primary entry (which also projected beyond the primary façade, though less so), but did not alter the size of the opening, and the replacement doors are compatible with the original doors and overall design. Likewise, although the slight widening and reconfiguration of the concrete ramps and railings flanking the portico entry steps has altered the original nature of the primary entry, , the scale and configuration of the new ramps are compatible with the original design. The building's first and fifth floor lobbies retain most of their original marble and terrazzo finishes, though their design was altered with the 2015 enclosure of one elevator on both floors. The 1966 mural in the first floor lobby remains unaltered in its original location. The fifth floor courtrooms also substantially retain their original hardwood finishes and wood built-in furniture. The rest of the building's semi-public spaces (corridors) and private office spaces possess little to no trace of their original materials, but their layout continues to reflect the original design intent of fixed circuits of corridors with reconfigurable space beyond. As a result, the building substantially retains integrity of design, materials, and workmanship.

The cumulative effect of the building's location, setting, design, materials, and workmanship are enough to convey the aesthetic and historic sense of the building in its historical context. The property has been in continuous use as a federal building and courthouse since its 1965 construction, and is easily recognizable as a 1960s building exemplifying general tenets of Mid-Century Modern architecture. The building's feeling and association are thus maintained.

Although the building has undergone alterations as detailed above, its large scale is such that these alterations have had minimal effect on its historic character. The majority of the building's exterior design elements and original materials remain, as well as the majority of its interior materials at public spaces on the first and fifth floors, ensuring that the Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse retains sufficient integrity for it to convey its historical and architectural significance.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- [ ] A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- [ ] B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- [x] C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- [ ] D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark “x” in all the boxes that apply.)

- [ ] A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- [ ] B. Removed from its original location
- [ ] C. A birthplace or grave
- [ ] D. A cemetery
- [ ] E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- [ ] F. A commemorative property
- [ ] G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions.)
ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance
1965-1966

Significant Dates
1965 (building completion and occupancy)
1966 (completion of lobby mural)

Significant Person
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)
N/A

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Architect/Builder
Lockard, Casazza & Parsons and Associates, Architect
Richard Guy Walton, Artist

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse is a significant Modern building constructed in Reno for the federal government during the post-World War II era. It was designed by prominent Reno architecture firm Lockard, Casazza & Parsons and Associates, and features a mural by noted Nevada artist Richard Guy Walton (installed in 1966). The Federal Building and U.S.

Courthouse is an excellent example of Mid-Century Modern architecture designed by local architects in the service of the GSA's post-war building campaign; its post-war iteration of the International style with New Formalist elements reflects the adaptation of earlier Modern principles to a new time period and to unique regional conditions, which in Reno's case included an emphasis on the most exuberant Mid-Century Modern styles. The building retains a high level of physical integrity, meaning it continues to convey its historical significance and original design intent. As a result, it is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places at the local level under Criterion C, with a period of significance assigned to 1965-1966, the time during which building construction was completed and the Walton mural was completed and installed.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Federal Buildings after World War II [5]

Reno's 1965 Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse was one of many government buildings constructed as part of a massive post-war building program to accommodate a workforce rapidly outgrowing the hodgepodge of facilities pieced together during previous years. Like most of the federal building stock constructed during this time (primarily during the 1960s, though work continued at a slightly slower pace into the 1970s), the Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse was managed by the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) and its Public Buildings Service (PBS) division. The process of the facility's 1963-1965 construction was guided and funded by the 1959 Public Buildings Act, typifying federal work completed during this time. Designed between 1960 and 1962 by a prominent local architectural firm, the building pre-dated the 1962 "Guiding Principles for Federal Architecture" but independently expressed some of its aspirational tenets through its efficient layout and Modern design reflecting contemporary architectural thought. As a result, the Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse is an excellent example of Modern design resulting from the federal government's post-war building campaign.

The GSA was established in 1949 to mitigate the federal government's need for resources and facilities – a need which became abundantly clear during the nation's post-World War II economic expansion and construction boom. The GSA's responsibility was to support the various bureaus and agencies with "record-keeping, building management and general procurement" by the most efficient and economical means possible.[6] In terms of building management, GSA served as the umbrella for the PBS division, which managed the government's real property interests, including design, construction, maintenance, repair, remodeling and enlargement of federal buildings.[7]

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[5] The information within this section draws upon the following sources: Architectural Resources Group, National Register Nominations: 300 N. Los Angeles Street, Los Angeles, CA and 230 N. First Avenue, Phoenix, AZ (drafts under review by GSA November 2019); C. Clifton Young Federal Building and United States Courthouse DOE; and Judith H. Robinson and Stephanie S. Foell, *Growth, Efficiency and Modernism: GSA Buildings of the 1950s, 60s and 70s*, U.S. General Services Administration, 2003; in addition to supplemental research.
[6] *Growth, Efficiency and Modernism*, 28.
[7] Ibid., 29.

In 1959, federal recognition of a severe nationwide shortage of government office space led to the passage of the Public Buildings Act, which was designed to meet the "need for general authority for the orderly planning and construction of public buildings" and increased and refined the PBS's ability to manage the public buildings program.[8] Crucially, it prioritized construction and use of purpose-built government buildings rather than pursuing lease-purchase programs as the PBS had done previously; in these programs, the government leased private buildings and eventually took over titles.[9] As part of the Public Buildings Act, the GSA also recognized the importance of art (primarily murals and sculptures) as an integral part of federal buildings.[10] A massive federal program to design and construct new facilities commenced and continued for over a decade, seeing the addition of over 7.7 million square feet of office space in 1961-1962 alone.[11] Among the many federal buildings constructed as part of this program were notable examples like the Federal Center in Chicago (Ludwig Mies Van Der Rohe, 1964); the John F. Kennedy Federal Building in Boston (Walter Gropius and the Architects Collaborative, 1966); the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Building (now the Robert C. Weaver Federal Building) in Washington, D.C. (Marcel Breuer, 1968); and the U.S. Tax Court in Washington, D.C. (Victor A. Lundy, 1974). Reno saw the construction of its Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse on Booth Street at this time.

As part of the post-war federal building campaign, GSA and the PBS initiated two significant changes: a commitment to hire private architects for the design and engineering of federal facilities, and an acceptance of Modern design. Following the process used in awarding general construction contracts, the PBS retained architects located in or near the city where projects were being constructed to achieve a local aesthetic as well as to benefit costs and efficiency.[12] Modernism was the antithesis of the classical design favored in federal buildings, but the style delivered on the post-war priorities of quick and moderately priced construction using new technology and mass-produced materials. In addition, it was becoming a widely favored idiom across the country, especially in private office design.

The shift to private architects and Modernism yielded few masterpieces at first. Generally, conservative rather than cutting-edge architects were selected for Federal commissions. The result was a collection of commonplace Modern curtain wall or masonry block buildings, indistinguishable from the private office buildings next door and lacking the symbolism, prominence, and quality of federal buildings in the past. With its exuberant decorative details and unconventional articulation, the Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse at 300 Booth Street was an outlier in this context. Designed in 1960-1962 by Lockard, Casazza & Parsons and Associates and constructed between 1963 and 1965 by the Kay-Cee Construction Corp., it successfully merged efficiency and economy with distinctive design and high-quality materials. Although it pre-dated the Guidelines and other important initiatives which changed the face of federal

[8] *Growth, Efficiency, and Modernism,* 38.
[9] Ibid., 28.
[10] Ibid., 66.
[11] Ibid., 41.
[12] Ibid., 41.

building design, the additional history below is provided to place the Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse within the context of GSA's collection of Modern buildings.

In 1961, President John F. Kennedy was inaugurated and found federal buildings lacking in both quantity and quality, specifically the dilapidated buildings in sight on Pennsylvania Avenue. He convened a committee to survey the government's immediate and long-term space needs, primarily in the Washington D.C. metropolitan area. Issued in June 1962, the resultant three-point policy was known as the "Guiding Principles for Federal Architecture," and provided general architectural guidelines for all federal buildings nationwide. The "Guiding Principles" stated the following:[13]

> 1. The policy shall be to provide requisite and adequate facilities in an architectural style and form which is distinguished and which will reflect the dignity, enterprise, vigor, and stability of the American National Government. Major emphasis should be placed on the choice of designs that embody the finest contemporary American architectural thought. Specific attention should be paid to the possibilities of incorporating into such designs qualities which reflect the regional architectural traditions of that part of the Nation in which buildings are located. Where appropriate, fine art should be incorporated in the designs, with emphasis on the work of living American artists. Designs shall adhere to sound construction practice and utilize materials, methods and equipment of proven dependability. Buildings shall be economical to build, operate and maintain, and should be accessible to the handicapped.
>
> 2. The development of an official style must be avoided. Design must flow from the architectural profession to the Government, and not vice versa. The Government should be willing to pay some additional cost to avoid excessive uniformity in design of Federal buildings. Competitions for the design of Federal buildings may be held where appropriate. The advice of distinguished architects ought to, as a rule, be sought prior to the award of important design contracts.
>
> 3. The choice and development of the building site should be considered the first step of the desi buildings will form a part. Where possible, buildings should be located so as to permit a generous development of landscape.

The "Guiding Principles" were influential, although they were not formal standards and offered guidance that was more aspirational than prescriptive. While many of the federal buildings completed during the government's post-war building campaign met at least some of the principles, degrees of success varied.

Federal Buildings in Reno

[13] As quoted in U.S. General Services Administration, "Guiding Principles for Federal Architecture," accessed May 2020, https://www.gsa.gov/real-estate/design-construction/design-excellence/design-excellence-program/guiding-principles-for-federal-architecture.

The Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse at 300 Booth Street is the third federal office building constructed in Reno. It was the first not to include a post office function, as well as the first not sited in downtown. The two buildings preceding it were both located on Virginia Street. Reno's first federal building, completed in 1909 and no longer extant, was a post office on the north side of the Truckee River. The two-story Neoclassical building included limited office space for federal bureaus but was primarily dedicated to post office activities. In 1934, it was replaced by the three-story post office and federal building on the south side of the river (50 S. Virginia Street, extant). Designed by renowned local architect Frederic J. DeLongchamps in the PWA Moderne style with expressive Art Deco elements, the new building housed federal agencies on the two floors above the ground floor post office. Occupants included the Department of Agriculture, the Bureau of Reclamation, the Public Works Administration, the Veterans Administration, the Weather Bureau, the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI), the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), the Social Security Administration, the Marine and Navy recruiting stations, and other federal agencies.[14]

Both the 1909 and 1934 federal buildings reflected responses to periods of intense growth in Reno. The city was the largest in Nevada by the 1910s, thanks to its prominence as a transportation hub, its proximity to booming mining districts (first in Virginia City, later in Goldfield and Tonopah), and the establishment of the University of Nevada. Residential development and population growth continued through the 1920s as a result. The legalization of divorce, the state's reduction of the divorce residency requirement from six months to six weeks, and the legalization of casino gambling all served to accelerate Reno's growth (and national prominence) from the 1920s through the lean years of the Great Depression as the city became a recreational destination and Nevada's primary locus for temporary residency by divorce-seekers. The construction of the 1934 post office and federal building reflected this growth and the need for expanded government services.

Reno boomed again after World War II, using its recreational and divorce industries to further capitalize on the economic growth lifting the nation during this period. New casinos, motels, hotels, convention centers, and resorts, often designed in Mid-Century Modern styles, appeared in and around downtown and provided thousands of jobs for locals. The 1960 Winter Olympics at Squaw Valley (about 50 miles west of Reno) also spurred new commercial construction as businesses competed to attract patronage through exuberant design, colorful details, and neon signage in eye-catching Googie styles. This commercial-oriented design idiom quickly came to define Reno's built environment in the popular imagination, and is likely to have influenced Lockard, Casazza & Parsons and Associates' unusually expressive design for the new Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse.

Reno's postwar population grew along with its economy, requiring the construction of numerous residential subdivisions. The City also turned to Modern architecture for the new institutional buildings constructed to serve the growing population, resulting in notable examples like the 1958 Pioneer Theater (Bozalis, Dickinson and Roloff); the 1962 Church Fine Arts Building

[14] Mella Harmon, "Reno Downtown Post Office," RenoHistorical, accessed November 2019, http://renohistorical.org/items/show/36?tour=5&index=0.

(Neutra and Alexander) and the 1963 Fleischmann Planetarium (R. Hellman) at the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR); the 1965 Centennial Coliseum (Neutra with Lockard, Casazza & Parsons and Associates, later altered and now the Reno-Sparks Convention Center); and the 1966 Washoe County Library (Hewitt Campau Wells).

Government services on all levels struggled to keep up with new postwar demand, including the federal level – its agencies were scattered all over Reno and Carson City in dozens of leased spaces beyond those in the existing post office and federal office building. In 1959, the GSA conducted a survey of potential sites for a new federal building and courthouse in Reno, and by 1960 funds had been appropriated and a site had been chosen (though not without controversy, as explained below).[15] The completion of the new federal building and U.S. courthouse at 300 Booth Street consolidated the area's many federal agencies and centralized federal courthouse activities. The facility continues to fulfill the same function, although its intensity of use has decreased since the 1996 construction of the Bruce R. Thompson U.S. Courthouse and Federal Building. In a return to patterns of the past, the1996 federal building was constructed on Virginia Street at the southern end of downtown Reno.

Development of the Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse, 300 Booth Street

The Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse at 300 Booth Street in Reno was one of the more expressive and successful designs produced by the 1960s federal building program, a relatively unusual result of the program prior to the "Guiding Principles." The building's curving wing walls and brightly colored geometric grilles are more reflective of the exuberant commercial and institutional architecture being built in Reno in the 1960s than of typical federal government buildings from this time. Its size, massing, high-quality cladding materials, and efficient layout are, however, very representative of more typical Modern-era federal architecture.

The 300 Booth Street building was the third federal building constructed in Reno, although it was the first constructed outside of the city's downtown business and institutional core centered on Virginia Street. By the late 1950s, at least 31 federal agencies and departments employing between 400 and 500 federal workers were scattered across both Reno and Carson City in dozens of leased spaces as well as existing federal buildings. [16] The GSA determined the region needed a new federal building and courthouse, and commenced surveying sites in 1959. It quickly zeroed in on Reno over Carson City, causing some consternation in the state capital but bolstering the profile of its larger and flashier neighbor to the north. In spring 1960, funding was appropriated and the GSA made a general public announcement that it was in search of a building site "substantially the size of a full city block," ideally in downtown Reno although it was open to other locations.[17] The available sites downtown proved too costly, so in November 1960 the

[15] "New Federal Building Site Is Determined," *Reno Gazette-Journal* 11/1/60; "Federal Office Building Land Proposal Requested," *Reno Gazette-Journal* 6/6/60; "Federal Building Money Is Cleared," *Reno Gazette-Journal* 4/19/60.
[16] GSA, "GSA Common Services for Agencies in the Federal Building & U.S. Courthouse," 1964 (brochure for occupants); "Construction Moves Ahead," *Reno Gazette-Journal* 4/8/64.
[17] "Federal Office Building Land Proposal Requested," *Reno Gazette-Journal* 6/6/60.

GSA purchased the vacant Booth Street site across from Reno High School.[18] Just two weeks later, it announced the selection of local firm Lockard, Casazza & Parsons and Associates to design the building for a fee of $147,240.[19]

There was some municipal and county opposition to the selected building site, partly because regional officials had envisioned a federal building as part of a larger proposed convention center complex downtown. A larger potential issue was difficulty with access to the Booth Street site, due to the lack of a Keystone Avenue bridge over the Truckee River and the age and low height of the existing bridge where Riverside Drive terminated at Booth. However, the general reaction among local officials who dealt regularly with federal agencies was positive, eagerly anticipating the consolidation of formerly scattered services in one location regardless of where it was.[20] Senator Alan Bible called the building "one of the greatest needs this growing area has today" and noted a centralized facility would "mean a saving of many taxpayers dollars."[21]

The GSA, and the architects designing the new building, proceeded rapidly. The GSA approved Lockard, Casazza & Parsons' design for a five-story reinforced concrete building with a columned portico over a glazed entrance in February 1962, and Congress approved the funding package for construction in August.[22] In January 1963, the GSA awarded the building contract to Kay-Cee Construction Company of Skokie, Illinois for its low bid of $3,148,600.[23] Construction began in February on the combination office and federal courthouse building, which incorporated two high-ceiling courtrooms and office spaces for the courts and attendant judiciary officials, as well as the Internal Revenue Service and the Departments of Labor and the Interior.[24] The column-free courtrooms required massive specialized trusses of riveted steel, shipped from the Bethlehem Steel Company's plant in Alameda, California.[25] Unusual for a building of this size, the Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse's design did not include a basement. Instead, the rear (east side) of the first story was reserved for mechanical and utilitarian uses. Research could not determine why this was the case, although it is well known that the areas adjacent to the Truckee River in this part of Reno can be very challenging to excavate due to the abundance of subsurface boulders and other alluvium. Excavation for the building's subsurface foundations appears to have proceeded without incident. By July 1963, construction was about a quarter complete, with foundations set and the building's steel and reinforced concrete structure framed out.[26]

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[18] "New Federal Building Site Is Determined."
[19] "Federal Building Architects Named," *Reno Gazette-Journal* 11/17/60.
[20] "New Federal Building Site Is Determined."
[21] "New Federal Building Clears Senate Group," *Reno Gazette-Journal* 8/29/62.
[22] "Federal Building Design Approved," *Reno Gazette-Journal* 2/16/62; "New Federal Building Clears Senate Group."
[23] "Illinois Firm Submits Low Bid on Reno Project," *Reno Gazette-Journal* 12/19/62; "Federal Building Job Won," *Reno Gazette-Journal* 1/10/63.
[24] "Federal Project Readied," *Reno Gazette-Journal* 1/14/63.
[25] "Steel…" *Reno Gazette-Journal* 6/14/63.
[26] "Taking Shape," *Reno Gazette-Journal* 7/11/63.

Construction encountered minor delays due to changes in the finishing plans for the two courtrooms, but went smoothly on the whole – by April 1964, the building was about three-quarters complete, seeing the application of exterior tile and marble and interior plaster.[27] To maximize flexibility for tenants, the building's general office areas featured movable metal partitions and easily maintained floors of vinyl asbestos tile.[28] Three passenger elevators, entry wheelchair ramps, and full air conditioning ensured access and comfort for users. The facility's windows were almost all operable to provide tenants the option of opening them for fresh air instead of being completely sealed and climate-controlled – a somewhat unusual option for a 1960s federal office building. In anticipation of heavy use by the public as well as the federal workforce, the site provided surface parking for 240 vehicles in lighted and landscaped lots, and the public spaces of its first and fifth floor lobbies were finished with rich yet hardy finishes of marble and terrazzo.

The new facility welcomed its first occupants in March 1965, including the Bureau of Land Management (occupying the entire third floor) and the Internal Revenue Service; the building's fifth floor was not yet finished, so the federal court occupants did not move in until July of that year.[29] Other occupants moving in to the building's 85,000 square feet of office space during 1965 included the GSA itself; the Department of Agriculture; the Civil Service Commission; the Department of Commerce; the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare's Indian Health division of the Public Health Service; the Department of the Interior's Fish and Wildlife Service; the Immigration and Naturalization Service; the FBI; the Department of Labor; the Treasury Department; the Selective Service System; and Congressional offices.[30] One agency that did not move to the new federal building was the U.S. Post Office, which remained in the 1934 DeLongchamps building on Virginia Street. Soon after move-in, the *Reno Gazette-Journal* found that most of the occupants of the new Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse were quite pleased with their new workplace, citing a state-of-the-art telephone switchboard, wide corridors, proximity of related federal offices to each other, and spacious, light-filled offices. Less enamored were the occupants of the windowless offices at the building's interior.[31]

In 1966, the final element of the Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse was installed: a 25 ft x 6 ½ ft oil-painted mural by Nevada artist Richard Guy Walton. A former Reno resident, Walton lived in nearby Virginia City at the time and "welcomed the opportunity to compete for the contract to paint the recently installed mural."[32] His "Life Before the Pioneer Era" triptych on the east wall of the building's first floor lobby features figural and abstract images in muted tones, paying homage to the pre-European nature and cultures of Nevada. As explained in an adjacent plaque:

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[27] "Construction Moves Ahead," *Reno Gazette-Journal*, 4/8/64.
[28] Building Brochure 1964.
[29] "Federal Building To Get Occupants on March 1," *Reno Gazette-Journal* 12/18/64; "Finishing Touches," *Nevada State Journal* 7/14/65.
[30] Building Brochure 1964.
[31] "Federal Building Pleases Government Workers," *Reno Gazette-Journal* 3/13/65.
[32] "Richard G. Walton Featured Artist at Theater Show," *Nevada State Journal* 9/30/66.

> The Nevada Bluebird (left), the unofficial state bird, symbolizes light, movement, and space.
>
> The wild horses (center) exemplify desert freedom.
>
> The Indian spirit (right) bears witness to man, nature, and time.
>
> Dividing this triptych (a painting of three parts) are bands of pre-historic Indian petroglyphs (hieroglyphs hewn in stone). The original markings were found beside the Truckee River in the mountain pass east of Sparks, a site known as the Altar of Antiquity. The ancient makers of these signs pre-date the Washoes, Shoshones or Paiutes.
>
> The artist has dedicated this work to the American Indian.

Walton's painting was said to be the largest in Nevada, and was included in AIA Fellow Louis G. Redstone's 1968 book *Art in Architecture*.[33]

In 1988, Congress designated the Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse as the C. Clifton Young Federal Building and United States Courthouse in honor of native Nevadan Clarence Clifton "Cliff" Young. He served in the U.S. House of Representatives, the Nevada State Senate, and on the Nevada Supreme Court, and had also been the Washoe County Public Administrator.[34] Young's namesake building continues to serve as a federal office building with court functions, though most of its federal court activity shifted to the Bruce R. Thompson U.S. Courthouse and Federal Building upon its 1996 completion. Aside from interior finish replacement in office spaces, partial reconfiguration of public lobbies, and minor exterior alterations, the Booth Street building has experienced only minor modifications since its 1965-1966 period of significance.

International Style and New Formalist Architecture

The Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse is a significant example of Mid-Century Modern architecture in the International Style with New Formalist elements. Mid-Century Modernism is an umbrella term used to describe an iteration of the International style that emerged in the post-World War II period, between the 1940s and 1960s, which adapted earlier Modern principles to the post-war context and unique regional conditions.

In the 1930s, the International Style was a new form of "pure" modernism that began to gain favor in the U.S. Rooted in the German Bauhaus school of thought for functionality over aesthetics and utilizing the technological advances of the Industrial Age, the International Style sought an "honest" expression of form, structure, and material. It was opposed to using historical precedent, specifically classical features, and superfluous ornamentation. The style was popularized in a 1932 exhibit at the Museum of Modern Art entitled, "Modern Architecture: International Exhibition," and the accompanying catalog, *The International Style: Architecture Since 1922*, by curators Henry-Russell Hitchcock and Philip Johnson. The exhibit and catalog gave a name and principles to the architectural movement exemplified in the works of its

[33] "Nevadan's Mural To Be Included in New Art Book," *Reno Gazette-Journal* 10/30/67.
[34] Carey & Co., DOE 2016, 9.

pioneering architects like Richard Neutra and Mies van der Rohe. Mies van der Rohe's motto, "less is more," aptly describe the primary tenets of the style.[35]

As described by Hitchcock and Johnson, the International Style was defined by three essential principles: "the emphasis of volume over mass, the regularity and standardization of elements, and the avoidance of ornament."[36] These three fundamental principles were manifest in all of the buildings on display at the exhibition, and were expressed through a number of common characteristics. Instead of heavy load-bearing walls, they had lightweight structural skeletons that allowed for more open and flexible interior spaces. Windows were arranged in horizontal bands and often wrapped around building corners, which provided ample natural light and also allowed them to be placed in a way that supported and complemented the building's interior function – a technique that was often not possible with older methods of construction. Roofs were flat. Exterior walls were finished in a single treatment – typically smooth white stucco – which "maintained the spirit of the building as a smoothly sheathed volume."[37] Other common characteristics of International Style buildings include horizontal orientation; emphasis on simple, geometric volumes; and flush-mounted windows with no trim.

Pure, orthodox applications of the International Style were rare in the United States, though regional interpretations by early Southern California Modernists like Richard Neutra and R.M. (Rudolph Michael) Schindler proved highly influential in the development of post-World War II Modernism. The work of these European-born architects dovetailed with that of American architects like Irving Gill, Frank Lloyd Wright, and Lloyd Wright. Their designs introduced new approaches to form, function, and aesthetics, focusing on simplicity, integrity, minimalism, structural expressionism, lack of ornamentation, and references to nature. These architects inspired "second generation" Modernists who developed new forms of Modernism that were born from both international and American precedents but matured into regional styles. In the desert West, typical characteristics of post-war Modernism included open expression of structure, simple geometric forms, ingenious use of mass-produced materials and industrial technologies, and the blurring of lines between indoor and outdoor living.

The post-war context was one of rapid population increase and a high demand for quick, efficiently built, and moderately priced buildings aided by advances in mass-production and building technology. With Mid-Century Modernism, local architects combined the pure geometric forms, clear expression of structure, minimal ornamentation, large expanses of smooth walls and glass, and open interior plans of the International style with indigenous site and climate treatments as well as newly available pre-fabricated materials. In arid climates, building features like brise-soleils, grilles, awnings, and canopies could help mitigate the intense light and heat of the desert environment.

[35] Phillip C. Johnson, *Mies van der Rohe*, The Museum of Modern Art, 1947.
[36] Gili Merin, "Modern Architecture International Exposition/Philip Johnson and Henry-Russell Hitchcock," Arch Daily, August. 2, 2013.
[37] Virginia Savage McAlester, A Field Guide to American Houses (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2013), 618.

New Formalism emerged as a sub-type of Modernism in the mid- to late-1950s. In a counter-reaction to the International Style's strict rejection of historical precedent, it is characterized by the reincorporation of classical proportions, scale, and forms, and the use of high-quality traditional materials. Architects Edward Durell Stone and Minoru Yamasaki were pioneers of the style; in the 1950s, they separately rejected some tenets of European Modernism and began to incorporate decorative features and clear references to historical architectural styles and types. They interpreted historical elements through an abstracted Modern lens, and modernized with industrial technologies and materials like concrete, metal, and glass. The style that emerged is known today as New Formalism, typically understood as an update and interpretation of classical forms.

Primarily employed in the civic or institutional sector, New Formalism yielded monumental buildings organized with a clear expression of structural hierarchy and reintroduced classical features such as the elevated podium, colonnade, arcade, and cornice in an abstract form. Traditional materials such as travertine, marble, or granite were employed in panelized, mass-produced forms, along with newer industrial materials including pre-cast concrete and glazed wall systems. In New Formalism, the design of the building often extends beyond the lot to align with the axes and symmetry of surrounding landscaping and streets to achieve monumentality amidst dense urban contexts.

Key features of New Formalism include strict symmetry; flat projecting rooflines; elevated podiums; columnar supports; abstracted archwork; full-height colonnades; high-quality traditional materials; and screens and grilles of perforated cast stone or metal. Designed landscapes and hardscapes are commonly incorporated into New Formalist designs, and include plazas, walkways, low plantings, and water features.

The Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse exhibits a few key characteristics of New Formalism, namely strict symmetry, prominent columnar supports at the front portico, panelized granite and marble cladding, and flat projecting rooflines. The GSA's 1964 description of the building recalls the goals of New Formalism, stating "The exterior use of marble and granite in conjunction with the coffered roof soffits and the two-story portico combine to give a dignified and impressive appearance."[38] However, the building's references to classical architecture are restrained—it does not incorporate an elevated podium, it does not exhibit dramatic articulations of form, and its size, though large, falls short of monumental. The building more strongly embodies general characteristics of International Style architecture in its simple geometric massing, horizontal bands of windows, flat roofs, and expanses of unornamented wall cladding (particularly brick and glazed brick). In addition to its traditional rich materials like granite, terrazzo, and marble, the building features mass-produced and technologically advanced materials including bands of operable aluminum windows sheltered by exuberantly colored aluminum and porcelain enamel grilles (themselves more evocative of Googie ornament than any New Formalist idiom) to help combat the summer heat of Reno's arid environment.

[38] Building Brochure, 1964.

Project Architect and Artist

The Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse was designed by project architects Lockard, Casazza & Parsons and Associates. This prominent local firm formed in 1951, when three established firms (Lockard and Casazza, Edward Parsons, and Russell Mills) combined forces in order to obtain larger government defense contracts during the booming postwar period. Lockard, Casazza & Parsons went on to design large-scale military and industrial facilities in Nevada, California, and Utah, as well as large institutional and commercial projects in Reno that built on the successes of each individual firm, discussed in more detail below. Among them were hospitals, detention centers, shopping centers, and multiple projects on school campuses. Each individual firm continued smaller-scale work on its own; Russell Mills, who died in 1959, also served on the Reno City Council. All of the firm's partners were members of the American Institute of Architecture (AIA) and active in the Northern Nevada Chapter. Lockard, Casazza & Parsons and Associates designed in a range of architectural styles but the firm was best known for its minimalist Modern designs executed on large institutional scales, encompassing Brutalist, International Style, and other expressions of the Modernist idiom.

Born in Santa Ynez, California in 1892, E. Keith Lockard studied architecture at the University of California, Berkeley and began working in Santa Barbara. He started with the firm Soule & Murphy, then worked for George Washington Smith until 1922, when he established a partnership with Roland F. Sauter. This firm designed a number of Period Revival buildings in Santa Barbara, including City Hall (1923), Santa Barbara High School (1923-1924, in association with William H. Weeks), and Cabrillo Pavilion (1926). Lockard partnered with Roy W. Cheeseman between 1938 and 1942, before moving to San Francisco to join Blanchard and Maher; while there, he worked on a number of large Navy projects during World War II, including the Naval Ammunition Depot in Hawthorne, Nevada; the Naval Air Station in Alameda, California; and the Naval Supply Depot in Clearfield, Utah.[39] After the war, Lockard moved to Reno to establish the new firm branch of Blanchard Maher and Lockard, becoming the successor and partnering with Ralph Casazza to form Lockard and Casazza in 1950. Lockard and Casazza designed a number of Modern buildings in Reno, including the Centennial Coliseum (now the Reno/Sparks Convention Center, in association with Los Angeles architect Richard Neutra), detention facilities, hospital buildings, office buildings (including the intact Late Moderne/International Style Hughes-Porter Building at 252 W. First Street), and at least three buildings at the University of Nevada, Reno: the Max C. Fleischmann College of Agriculture (with Edward S. Parsons) and two Physical Science Buildings. Lockard died in 1968.

Architect Ralph A. Casazza was a third-generation Nevadan born in Reno in 1926. After briefly attending the University of Nevada, Reno, he established his own architectural practice and garnered attention by designing a model home known as the "Reno Contemporary House" in 1948. This home, somewhere near the intersection of Circle Drive and Monroe Street, was billed as "an example of ultra-modern design" and reflected Casazza's early and enduring interest in Modern architectural principles.[40] Another of his early designs, St. Albert's Church across from

[39] AIA Architects' Roster Questionnaire, June 26, 1953.
[40] "400 Visitors Make Tour of Reno Homes," *Reno Gazette-Journal* 10/18/48. No photos or address of the building could be found, and it is unknown whether it is extant.

UNR (now Our Lady of Wisdom Catholic Newman Community) was said to be "one of Reno's most modernistic buildings."[41] Casazza became a licensed architect in 1949 (when architect licensing first began in the state) and formed his partnership with E. Keith Lockard in 1950, shortly before he was drafted into the Army and served in the Korean War for two years.[42] Lockard and Casazza completed a number of notable designs before Lockard's 1968 death (noted above). Casazza formed Casazza, Peetz and Associates and went on to design the main Reno post office; multiple churches, schools, and office buildings; several UNR buildings including Lawlor Events Center; Shoppers Square (built by the Casazza family on its former ranchland); and the 1978 Washoe County Administrative Center. The firm won an AIA Merit Award for Excellence in Architecture for its Lawlor Events Center and Washoe County Administrative Center designs, both of which reflect Modern styles with Brutalist influences. Casazza was honored with several other AIA chapter awards for his long service to the region. One of the architect's last designs was for the Bruce R. Thompson U.S. Courthouse and Federal Building in 1996, into which some functions of his 1965 Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse moved. Casazza retired in 1999 and died in 2013.

Another Nevada native, architect Edward S. Parsons was born in Tonopah in 1907 and moved to Reno with his family as a child. After graduating from the University of Pennsylvania in 1932, he returned to Reno to work for iconic Reno architect Frederic DeLongchamps for several years, then established his own firm in 1938. Like the other members of Lockard, Casazza & Parsons and Associates, Parsons did some residential work but specialized in institutional designs for churches, schools (including UNR), hospitals, and public buildings. His interest in Nevada's older built environment led him to develop an inventory of significant and endangered historic buildings, shifting his attention from his new construction work until "by 1979 he was supervising virtually all the major restoration projects in the state."[43] Parsons' restoration work on significant properties like Piper's Opera House and the Fourth Ward School in Virginia City, Genoa's Mormon Station, Washoe Valley's Bowers Mansion, the state Capitol in Carson City, and the Lake Mansion in Reno were crucial to their preservation. Parsons died in 1991.

Artist Richard Guy Walton was a painter and photographer born in San Francisco in 1914. In 1929, he arrived in Reno with his divorce-seeking mother and became fascinated with both the city and the light and landscapes of the desert.[44] Walton studied at the Chouinard Art Institute in Los Angeles and returned to Reno in 1936 to join the Federal Arts Project during the Great Depression. Under the Project's sponsorship, he painted four large studies of *Tom Sawyer* characters for the Washoe County Library, two of which survive as part of the Smithsonian's National Collection of Fine Arts.[45] His other work during this period included several paintings of early days in Virginia City and the Comstock Lode, and a mural of a historic Snake River

[41] "St. Albert's Church Dedication Held," *Reno Gazette-Journal* 7/12/50.
[42] "Ralph Anthony Casazza," *Reno Gazette-Journal* 4/7/13.
[43] "Revered Reno Architect Dies at 83," *Reno Gazette-Journal* 2/24/91.
[44] James W. Hulse, "Richard Guy Walton (1914-2005)," *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly* 33(2), 1990, accessed November 2019 at Online Nevada Encyclopedia, http://www.onlinenevada.org/articles/richard-guy-walton.
[45] "Smithsonian Acquires Two Nevada Paintings," *Reno Gazette-Journal* 1/10/75.

ferry in the Buhl, Idaho post office.[46] In the 1950s, Walton moved to Virginia City, Nevada and kept his focus on Nevada for much of the rest of his career, photographing Virginia City and creating paintings inspired by the natural landscape and the state's prehistory, history, and built environment. His subject matter was not limited to the Great Basin, but also included politicians, complex mathematics, Greek mythology, and "the interaction of light, water, and space" from Tahiti to the Netherlands.[47] Walton's 1966 mural for the Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse in Reno was included in AIA Fellow Louis G. Redstone's 1968 book *Art in Architecture*.[48] It was said to be the largest mural in Nevada at the time. The artist's work was exhibited in numerous shows locally and nationwide, including a retrospective at the Nevada Museum of Art in 1993 and the 2011 exhibit "Post-War Bohemians in Northern Nevada" at the University of Nevada, Reno. Walton died in 2005.

Conclusion

The Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse is worthy of individual landmark designation on the local level under Criterion C, as an excellent example of an International Style/New Formalist institutional building. It reflects the work of local architectural firm Lockard, Casazza & Parsons and Associates and contains a mural painted by significant Nevada artist Richard Guy Walton. Predating the "Guiding Principles for Federal Architecture" stewarded by the GSA, the building's design nonetheless reflected some key aspirations of these federal guidelines, most prominently the application of contemporary architectural thought – in this case, the International Style with elements of New Formalism. The Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse is still in use as a federal office and courthouse building today, as it was when it originally opened to provide much-needed space for a growing post-war federal workforce.

[46] The Living New Deal, "Post Office Mural – Buhl, ID," accessed November 2019 at https://livingnewdeal.org/projects/post-office-mural-snake-river-ferry-buhl-id/.
[47] "Richard Guy Walton."
[48] "Nevadan's Mural To Be Included in New Art Book," *Reno Gazette-Journal* 10/30/67.

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H+K Architects. General Services Administration New Entry Vestibule and Revised Security, Architectural Drawings, 2016.

Hulse, James W. "Richard Guy Walton (1914-2005)." *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly* 33(2), 1990.

Johnson, Phillip C. *Mies van der Rohe*. The Museum of Modern Art, 1947.

Lockard, Casazza & Parsons and Associates, Architects and Engineers. Court House and Federal Office Building, Architectural Drawings, 1962.

McAlester, Virginia Savage. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2013.

Nevada State Journal, various dates.

Reno Gazette-Journal, various dates.

Robinson, Judith H. and Stephanie S. Foell. *Growth, Efficiency and Modernism: GSA Buildings of the 1950s, 60s, and 70s*. U.S. General Services Administration, 2003.

URS Corporation. Design-Build Repair & Alteration at C. Clifton Young Federal Building & U.S. Courthouse – Reno, Nevada, Architectural Drawings, 2009.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

____ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
____ previously listed in the National Register
____previously determined eligible by the National Register
____designated a National Historic Landmark
____ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #_____
____recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
____ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

____ State Historic Preservation Office
____ Other State agency
_X_ Federal agency
____ Local government
____ University
____ Other
Name of repository: _Region 9, U.S. General Services Administration_____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _N/A_____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property __4.24 acres_____

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates
Datum if other than WGS 84:_____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)
1. Latitude: 39.518048 Longitude: -119.826189

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse is located at 300 Booth Street, Reno, Washoe County, Nevada. Its site is bound by Booth Street to the west, Keystone Avenue to the east, and parcel lines to the north and south.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The property lines are the legally recorded boundary lines.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Katie Horak/Principal, and Mary Ringhoff/Senior Associate

organization: _Architectural Resources Group_____
street & number: __360 E. 2nd Street, Suite 225_____
city or town: _Los Angeles_____ state: __CA_____ zip code:__90012_____
e-mail__ k.horak@arg-la.com; m.ringhoff@arg-la.com_____
telephone:__(626) 583-1401_____
date:__September 2020_____

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse
City or Vicinity: Reno
County: Washoe
State: Nevada
Photographer: Mary Ringhoff, Architectural Resources Group
Date Photographed: September 12, 2019

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

1 of 17 Overview of north and west (primary) façades, view southeast.

2 of 17 Overview of west (primary) and south façades, view northeast.

3 of 17 West (primary) façade and portion of north façade, view southeast.

4 of 17 West (primary) façade and portion of south façade, view northeast.

5 of 17 West (primary) façade, central volume and entry portico, view east.

6 of 17 Primary entry in west façade, view northeast.

7 of 17 Detail: aluminum and porcelain enamel grillework over primary entry.

8 of 17 South and east (rear) façades, view northwest.

9 of 17 East (rear) façade, view northwest.

10 of 17 South façade, one-story side volume, view northwest.

11 of 17 North façade, one-story side volume, view southwest.

12 of 17 Main lobby interior, first floor, view north.

13 of 17 Richard Guy Walton's "Life Before the Pioneer Era" mural, main lobby interior, first floor.

14 of 17 Main lobby interior, first floor, elevator lobby, view east.

15 of 17 Courtroom lobby interior, fifth floor, view east.

16 of 17 Courtroom lobby interior, fifth floor, view west.

17 of 17 Courtroom with original finishes, fifth floor, view north.

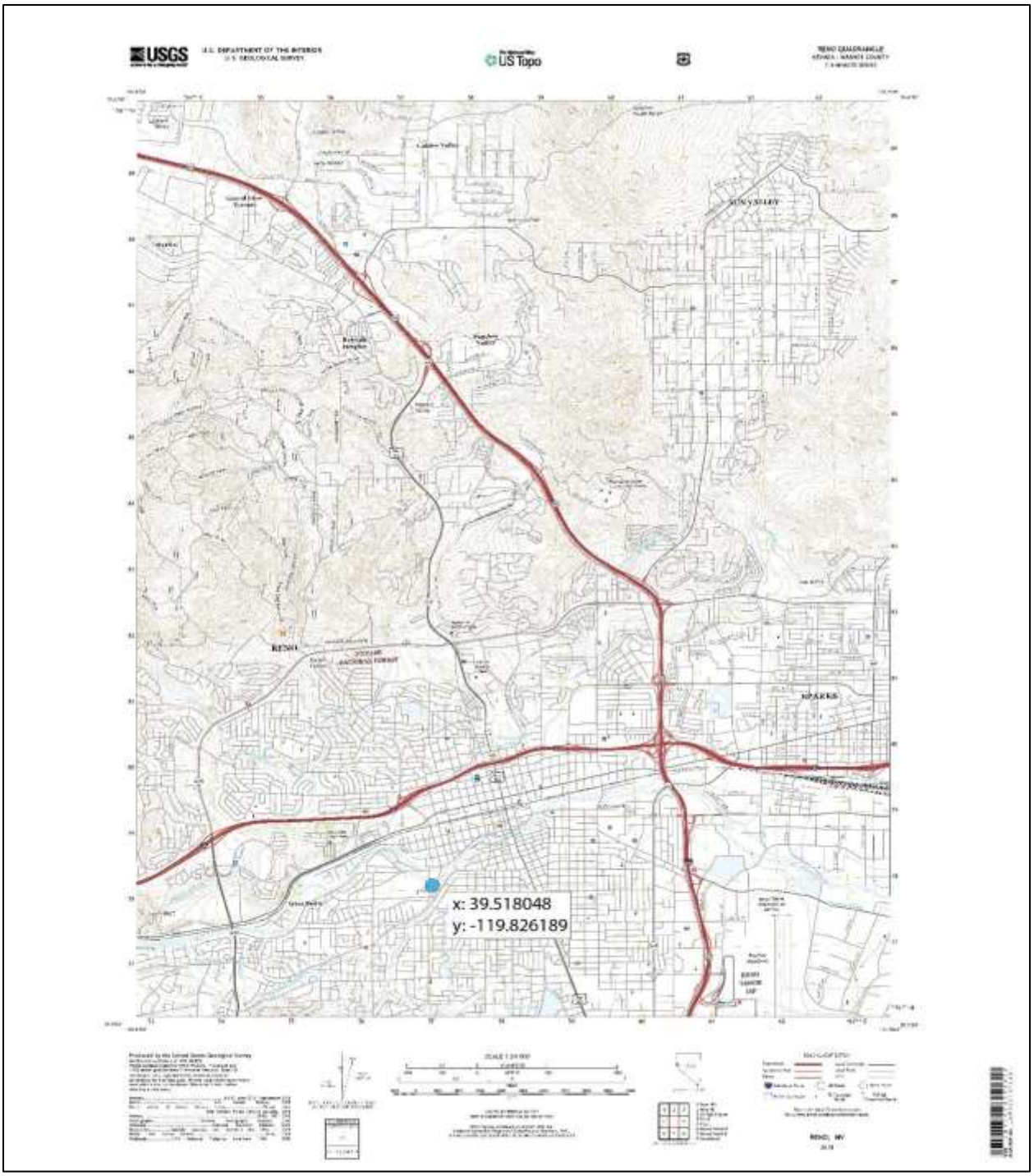
Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for nominations to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.). We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.
Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for each response using this form is estimated to be between the Tier 1 and Tier 4 levels with the estimate of the time for each tier as follows:

Tier 1 – 60-100 hours
Tier 2 – 120 hours
Tier 3 – 230 hours
Tier 4 – 280 hours

The above estimates include time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and preparing and transmitting nominations. Send comments regarding these estimates or any other aspect of the requirement(s) to the Service Information Collection Clearance Officer, National Park Service, 1201 Oakridge Drive Fort Collins, CO 80525.

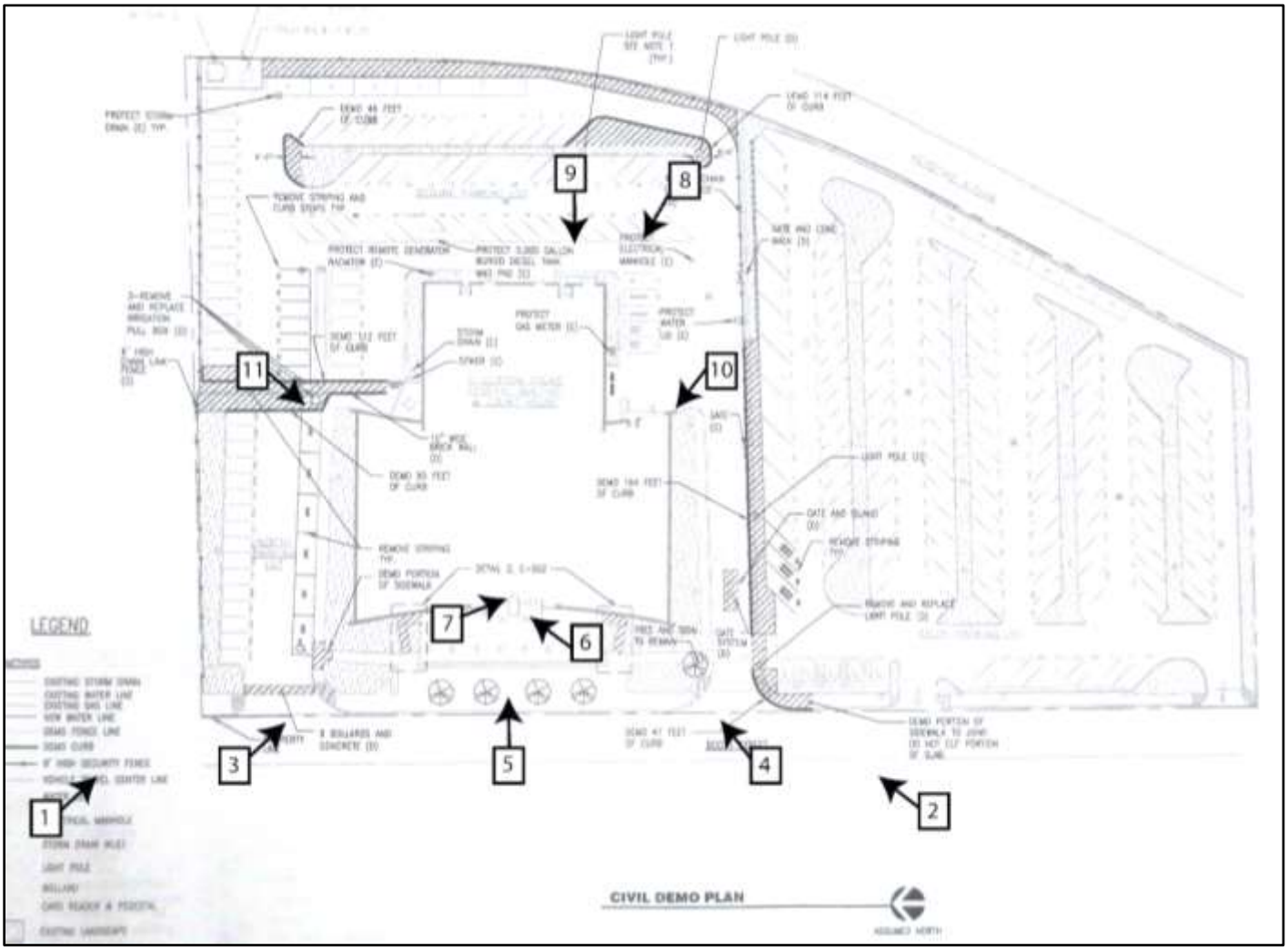
Location Map

Latitude: 39.518048 Longitude: -119.826189



USGS Topographical Map, Reno, Nevada, 2018,7.5-Minute Series

Sketch Map/Photo Key 1 of 3: Building Exterior

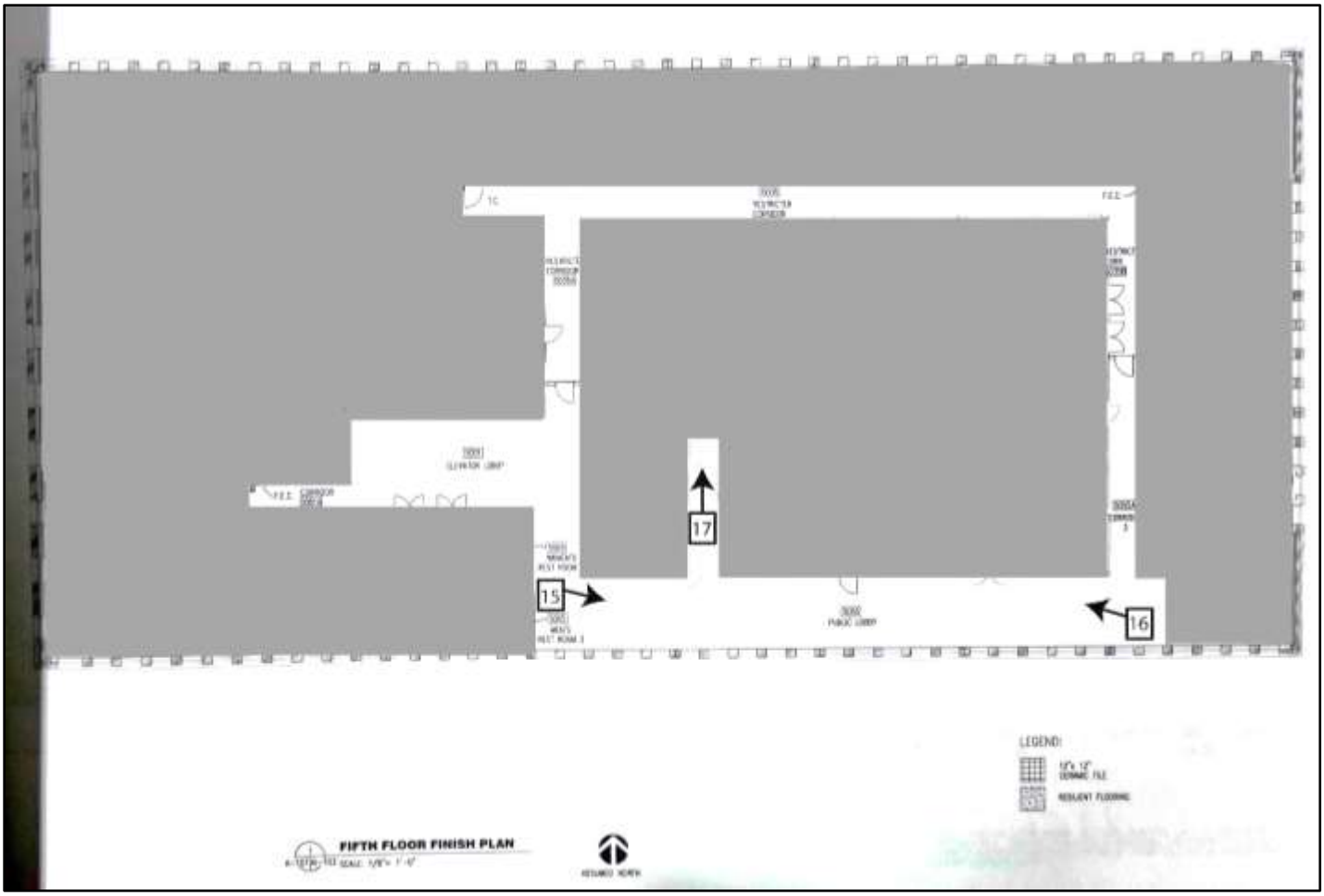


Base map: URS Corporation, 2009.

Sketch Map/Photo Key 2 of 3: First Floor Interior

Base map: URS Corporation, 2009.

Sketch Map/Photo Key 3 of 3: Fifth Floor Interior



Base map: URS Corporation, 2009.

Figure 1. View to northeast, December 1965. Source: National Archives.[49]

[49] Federal Judicial Center, "Historic Federal Courthouses, Reno, Nevada," accessed November 2019, https://www.fjc.gov/history/courthouse/reno-nevada-1965.

Figure 2. View to northeast, 1970s. Carey & Co., "National Register Eligibility Determination," 10. Source: Nevada Historical Society.

Figure 3. Artist's rendering showing view to southeast, 1964. Source: GSA.